

VZCZCXRO2456  
RR RUEHGH  
DE RUEHUL #0827 1460732  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 260732Z MAY 09  
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4445  
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC 8603  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6023  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9766  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5934  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI  
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0736  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4440  
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 3417  
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 6613  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1009  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2346  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1420  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2029

UNCLAS SEOUL 000827

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [KS](#) [US](#)  
SUBJECT: SEOUL - MEDIA REACTION

NORTH KOREA: NUCLEAR TEST  
-----

"NEW CRISIS, CALM RESPONSE"

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo editorialized (05/26): "The fact that North Korea has become a nuclear state poses a grave threat to our national security. We need to reexamine and reorganize our security measures immediately. Although our conventional weapons are much stronger than North Korea's, they are useless before a nuclear weapon. Since we are not in a position to possess nuclear weapons immediately, we have no choice but to entirely depend on the U.S. nuclear umbrella."

"S. KOREA MAY NEED ITS OWN DETERRENT"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (05/26): "Although the ROK is under desperate threat from North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles, there is no way for the ROK to take substantial countermeasures against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats because Seoul is bound by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the ROK-U.S. Memorandum of Understanding on missiles. ... Under North Korea's nuclear and missile threat, the ROK now needs "deterrence for self-defense."

"REAFFIRMING EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE N. KOREA NUCLEAR ISSUE"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (05/26): "Although the Barack Obama Administration has adopted a big picture approach favoring comprehensive direct negotiations with North Korea, it has dragged its feet over coming up with specific measures. ... It is true that the U.S.'s relaxed attitude contributed to aggravating the situation. ... In particular, by snubbing North Korea with "benign neglect," many U.S. officials did not try to prevent the nuclear test but made it an established fact."

"IS N. KOREA DETERMINED TO LIVE WITH NUKES?"

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized (05/26): "Pyongyang seems to believe that it can maintain its authoritarian system with nuclear weapons. But North Korean leader Kim Jong-il and his ruling elite

must realize that pouring money into nuclear weapons and missile development without caring for their hungry people will lead to their country collapsing from internal factors. "

STEPHENS